Democracy of the Spirit

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Letter from Hoch Brown

THE UNIVERSAL DEMOCRACY OF THE SPIRIT.

Joel 2:28 And it shall cometo pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.

INTRO. Joel has been called the Prpohet of Pentacost. At Pentacost when the dpostles were accused of being drunk Peter stood up and replied, "This is that which which was spoken by the psophet Joel" .

I. Prosperity and Pentacost.

1. "Afterward, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.

The word "afterward" refess back to what Joel had just described- the return of full prosperity.

The plague of locusts

The prmised r estoration

Then afterward shall come the pouring out of the Spirit.

According to Joel prosperity and Pentacost have much in common between them. It seems almost incredibiblo to think of economics and evangelism having a close relationship to each other

2. As fact, they have much to do with each other.

There can be no real revival of religion until there is first a revival of economic justice and a general material well-being.

George Adam Smith- "Every real revival of religion that the Xn world hasseen has happened in years of prosperity. Religious and social degradation go hand in hand."

So long as people have to toil and struggle to keep their bodies fed and clothed they have neither the leisure nor the desire to concern themselves with the things of the Spirit.

Jesus fed the mulittudes with the bread that perished before he talked to them about the Bread of Life. Soup, soap, salvation - Booth

First, physical suffering and destitution m ust be relieved, then, afterward, when men live in their own homes and their work is no longer a suffering hardship and crushingstruggle, comes the pouring out of Hod's Spirit in real revival.

II. God pors out His Spirit upoj all flesh.

1. A truth dear to Xns but often overlooked and unbelieve

Men may be without the k owledge of God the Father, men hay be without the knowledge of God the Son, but no man is without the witness of the Spirit of God.

God's Spirit has been poired out upon all flesh.

2. Because no man anywhere has been left without the witnebs of the Spirit, no man anywhere has been left outsid the family of God.

If to belong to the family of God one had to believe in the God the Father, then some would be left out:

If to belong one had to believe in God the Son, then many more would be left out.

But because all men have the witness of the Spirit of God in them all men everywhere belong to the family of God.

God's family includes all men everywhere without respect to race, color creed or opinion or social standing or any other thing. ~~God's Spirit is as broad as his Spirit~~ God's family is as broad as his Spirit and God's Spirit is as broad as humanity. It is the great democracy of the Spirit.

3. Man has always worked against this conception of Spiritual democracy. Selfishness and exclusiveness operate in the sphere of religion as well as elsewhere. History proves this beyond a doubt.

Men like to feel that they have special priveleges with their God, that they are the exclusive possessors of the truth and of the grace andfavors ofGod. They are the elect, the chosen ones, while all others are excluded Church governments and creeds largely just this.

4. This conflict between exclusive control and the democracy of the Spirit all thru the Old Testament

Orthodox Judiasism drew a hard ana fast line between Jew and Gentile, between Hebrew and hathen.

But opposing this there are some larger teachings of the Spirit.

The mysterious Melchisedec, King of Salem, a contemporary of Abraham but outside the orthodox Temple system.

Balaam the heathen prophet, outside of Judiasm , yet under the control of the Spirit.

Jonah preaching to the ninnevites!

Thru Malachi-"My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering."

5. In the New Testament the same conflict.
   a. Because Jesus taught the larger religion of th Spirit he came in conflict with the Judiasm of his day.
      True worshippers on Mt.Gerizim
      The faith of the Roman centurian.
      The Syro-Phenician woman set up above pharisee and scribe
      The Gentiles would be first and the chosen Jew last!
   All such teaching was galling to the Jews and the rose up and crucified Jesus for it!

6. Xty itself has not been free from this inclination t stifle the Spirit of God.
   The first disciples slow to learn the lesson of the universal democracy of the Spirit and the spiritual brotherhood of all men,
      Before Peter would baptize Cornelius, a godly centurian, he had to be given the vision from the housetop.
   St.Paul had to fight long and hard before he could induce the Church let Gentiles become Xns without first ~~becoming~~ accepting Sudias m.

The Church has always wanted to draw hard and fast lines, and we have the spectacle of the many differest sects and creeds of Xns. But thru a ll the period of our Church history the Spiri has not been altogether quenched.
   Great and noble souls in all ages have caught the vision of the democracy of the Sprit of God
      Tertullian: "Anima Naturaliter Christiana"
      Soul by nature Christian
   St.Augustine: The world was truly Xn from the day of creation. It has been called Xn only since X." Gen.1:2

Aritsts and poets also have caught the vision of the democracy of the Spirit of God.
   Great sould without the Xn knowledge of G but who in their power of the Spirit rendered great service.
   Dante throwing into the Inferno church fathers and popes, and exalting some of the noblest characters outside the sphere of revelation

III. There nevr was a day when a recognition of this Democracy of the Spirit of God was so sorely needed as this very day of ours.

Today we are seeking

1. ~~This is "Good-Will Sunday", instituted~~ to promot a followship uniting all peoples in a community of sympathy and understanding in a truly co-operative life.

Before this can be accomplished many barriers have to be burned away.

Distinctions of nationality, of religion, of race, of color must be subordinated and even forgotten. All manner of prejudices must be overcome.

The followship of the world must be laid on a foundation broad enough to include all and strong enough to ~~X~~ support all.

Where can such a foundation be found except in the ~~X~~ witness ~~f~~ lodged in the hearts of all men that they are children of God. And if children, then heirs, joint heirs to the grace of God, to all the rights and privileged of life.

The new world-democracy will never be realized short of the truth that the Spirit of God has been poured out upon all flesh and that men everywhere are boud together in one spiritual family.

And nothing short of the outpouring of God's Spirit will ever break down the barriers of tradition andnprejudice that prevent the great day from dawning.

Consider what we hear about "Americanization", for instance. Musch of it assmes that we are the sole possessors of all that is worth while, that we are sort of superior to all other. And we seek in our americanization work to take the aliens who come to us and make them wholly over from what they have been into something altogether different, just as tho God's truth is to be found only in our political system and in our American life.

Much of our Americanization propaganda has overlooked the fact that the Spirit of God functions thru other political systems and life

5. than our own.

True Americanization must be a progressive evolution in which we cooperate with all others and give right and share to every other race and creed than our own.

Before we can realize world peace and brotherhood the democracy of the Spirit must be recognized in every line of life. In business and industry, in politics and in society, and in our schools and churches we must stop hindering the flow of God s Spirit of love and goodness. We must become channels of progress instead of dams of destruction.

We must become uniters of human hearts & minds, and not dividers

(truth justice goodness love